UNITY. FREEDOM.

THE

Unitarian

MONTHLY.

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."—*Tennyson.*

An Organ of Reasonable Religion.

FAITH. FELLOWSHIP.

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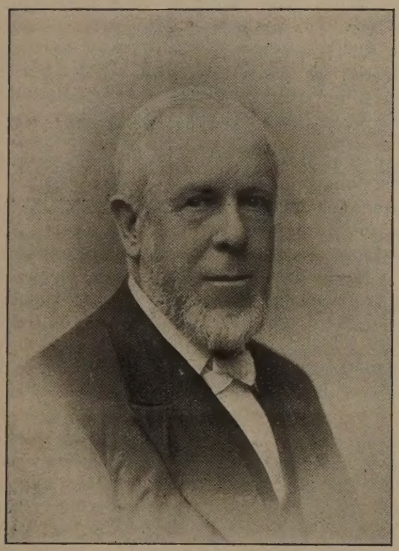

Rev. A. N. BLATCHFORD, B.A., Bristol.

Born, Plymouth, December 11th, 1842, of old West Country stock. Educated, Tavistock Grammar School; Manchester New College, London, under the tutorial influence of John James Tayler and James Martineau (1860-6); graduated B.A., London University; Hibbert Scholar, 1864, along with the late Rev. R. A. Armstrong, B.A., his sole surviving fellow-student of that year being the present Principal of Manchester College, Oxford (the Rev. Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A.); Assistant Minister to the Rev. William James, Lewin's Mead Chapel, Bristol, 1866-76; sole minister, same chapel, from Mr. James' death (1876) up to the present time, making a pastorate of 43 years. Mr. Blatchford was seconder to Rev. R. A. Armstrong's motion for the formation of a National Triennial Conference of Unitarian and Kindred Churches as a deliberative and consultative assembly; was preacher of annual sermon, British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 1891; for some years Secretary and twice President, Western Unitarian Union of Churches; is writer of some 70 hymns, several of which are used by almost every denomination; is author of a volume of ballads, "Idylls of Old Greece," of "Studies in Religion from Shakespeare," and the recently published "Church Councils and their Decrees"; he is a brilliant lecturer, especially on literary subjects, and much sought for in the West by societies outside his own communion, particularly in Bristol, where his work has led to most friendly relations between his Church and people of other denominations; he has been President, Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society, and was made its first life member. In Bristol Mr. Blatchford has been active as a citizen in educational and philanthropic work, including membership of Municipal Committees for Poor Relief, and for the Hospital Sunday Fund. Wherever there are Unitarians he is held in honour, and in most affectionate regard amongst those in the West of England, where he is best known. He is a sturdy defender of the "Unitarian" name and the Faith for which it stands. We commend to our readers the article from his pen specially written for them, which appears on another page. Unitarian Christianity can never be said to be lacking in fine examples of Christian character, or in worthy champions of its principles while it is represented by such men as he.

Varieties.

We demand
To know Him first, then trust Him, and then love,
When we have found Him worthy of our love,
Tried by our own poor hearts, and not before;
He must be truer than the truest friend,
He must be tenderer than a woman's love,
A father better than the best of sires.

——— —O. W. Holmes.

I am afraid the only broad Church possible is one that has its creed in the heart, and not in the head,—that we shall know its members by their fruits, and not by their words. —O. W. Holmes.

The New World's Gospel.

This is the new world's gospel: Be ye men!
Try well the legends of the children's time;
Ye are the chosen people, God has led
Your steps across the desert of the deep
As now across the desert of the shore;
Mountains are cleft before you as the sea
Before the wandering tribe of Israel's sons;
Still onward rolls the thunderous caravan,
Its coming printed on the Western sky,
A cloud by day, by night a pillared flame;
Your prophets are a hundred unto one
Of them of old who cried: "Thus saith the Lord";
They told of cities that should fall in heaps,
But yours of mightier cities that shall rise,
Where yet the lonely fishers spread their nets
Where hides the fox, where hoots the midnight owl;
The tree of knowledge in your garden grows
Not single, but at every humble door;
Its branches lend you their immortal food,
That fills you with the sense of what ye are.
No servants of an altar hewed and carved
From senseless stone by craft of human hands,
Rabbi, or dervish, brahmin, bishop, bonze,
But masters of the charm with which they work
To keep your hands from that forbidden tree!
Ye that have tasted that divinest fruit,
Look on this world of yours with opened eyes!
Ye are as gods! Nay, makers of your gods,—
Each day ye break an image in your shrine
And plant a fairer image where it stood.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The Chronicles of Parson Pimm.

By the Author of "Randal's Principle," Etc.

CHAPTER X.

There is a great deal of talk now-a-days about environment.

When I was minister at Blanktown, our church building was in need of interior renovation, and we required quite a number of repairs and improvements.

So we established a Sewing Society and worked for a Bazaar. From this we realised a fairly large sum, which enabled us to do what was required.

The pew floors were mostly bare boards, and only a few of the seats were cushioned. So amongst other things I suggested that we should cushion all the seats and that all the pew floors should be carpeted.

"What! put carpets on the pew floors: that will never do."

"Why not?" I asked.

I knew what was coming. As a matter of fact I may say that some of our elderly men were addicted to the very questionable habit of chewing tobacco. In a country town, such as ours was then, it was tolerated and "winked" at. And those elderly men, very decent members of our church in other respects, were guilty of expectorating upon the pew floors.

"Why not put carpets down upon the pew floors? Why it would not do at all. Some of our members who now spit upon the floor would do so upon the new carpets."

That declaration sounded conclusive. And possibly it was thought that such a statement finally settled the matter.

But it was not so. For I ventured to say:

"May be if carpets were put down upon the floors there would be no more spitting. Is it likely that anyone would spit upon carpet?"

This led to an interesting discussion.

I hazarded the opinion that a change of environment might lead to a change of habit, and that the persons at present guilty of such an objectionable practice as that of chewing tobacco in a place of worship would cease their practice under the new conditions.

So it was discussed and ultimately agreed upon that carpets be put down. And all the pews were carpeted and cushioned alike, and from that time no attempt at expectoration on the church floor was known.

A change of environment led to a change of habit.

In some churches the preacher is expected to draw a congregation and to maintain the hold of his church upon those who come.

Were there no hurtful factors in church environment he would possibly in many cases have a better chance of realising the aforesaid expectations.

One lady said: "I like to go, but the church is so cold that I feel that I am being frozen. The last Sunday morning I went I felt nearly starved to death. I was shivering all the time, and I caught a fearfully bad cold, and have been under the doctor ever since."

What minister can fairly be expected to succeed against such an unfavourable environment as that for his hearers?

"They ought to be ashamed of themselves going on like that in a place of worship. They are a perfect nuisance every Sunday, and there is neither comfort nor pleasure in going where they are."

This was a complaint against some young people who were persistently chattering during service. This is how people are driven away. It takes an extraordinary preacher to compete against this sort of thing.

A young man who had been somewhat of a scapegrace, began to mend his ways. He was persuaded to come to our chapel. And he seemed to enjoy coming. But one Sunday evening, just when there seemed to be a probability of his settling down amongst us permanently, it happened that the minister preached about the prodigal son in the parable. And though there was nothing in the sermon that could be said to have particular reference to this young man—when he was passing out of the chapel some thoughtless and ignorant woman, with too little Christianity in her heart, exclaimed to him in the hearing of others:

"Hallo! are you here? I should think the sermon was just meant for you."

He never came again. It drove him off. Environment—yes, that woman was the stinging part of it.

It is the minister's work to win souls. And who shall say it is not the work of every professing Christian? If the ways of the people who belong to a church were in some cases more kindly and winning, the preachers would not fail to win many souls who are now driven away.

And this is true in all denominations.

(To be continued.)

The Society of Unitarian Christians

Established in the West of England.

(By the Rev. Clement E. Pike).

I.

In the concluding years of the 18th Century, Unitarian zeal began to spend itself in the formation of Book and Tract Societies. It would be difficult to adequately estimate what the Denomination owes to these early societies. For a considerable period they furnished its only organisation, and they still survive in the County Associations, and in the B. and F. U. A. The latter institution is not backward in recording its indebtedness to "The Unitarian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Practice of Virtue by Distribution of Books," founded in 1791. Other Associations appear to ignore their origin, and this may be due in some cases to the supposition that these Book Societies, as they are sometimes called, made the distribution of books their only object. On the contrary, the supply of literature, though the main purpose, was subsidiary to other aims. It would not be easy to state a single function of the modern association which they did not perform. They afforded opportunities for coming together, for the interchange of thought, and mutual hospitality: they were the only conferences of those early days: they made grants. The second in date of these useful institutions, second only to the London Society, which had the start of a few months, was "The Society of Unitarian Christians established in the West of England," founded in 1792 by the Rev. Timothy Kenrick, of Exeter. Mr. Kenrick was a Welshman, born in the parish of Ruabon, in Denbighshire, Jan. 26th, 1759, grandson of Rev. John Kenrick, of Wrexham, where Timothy received his early education. In his sixteenth year he entered the dissenting Academy at Daventry, where, before completing his course, he was chosen Assistant Tutor, continuing his services, with Rev. Thomas Belsham, first as Classical, and next as Mathematical Tutor; was chosen minister of the two United congregations of Dissenters in Exeter, in 1784; ordained in the following year. At Exeter he re-established an Academy chiefly for training Dissenting ministers, opening his house for the purpose in 1799. In the summer of 1804, while on a visit to his native place, during a walk in the fields round Wrexham, he died suddenly, probably of an apoplectic seizure.

Shortly after the establishment of the London Unitarian Book Society, Kenrick founded an institution on similar lines for the West of England. Through the kindness of his great-grandson, the esteemed Treasurer of the Western Unitarian Association, I have before me the minute of this Institution, in Timothy Kenrick's handwriting. The record of the first meeting begins thus:

"Exeter, June 29th, 1792.

At a quarterly meeting of ye committee of ye Society of Unitarian Christians established in ye West of England." This is the earliest evidence of title and date. It was the day of small things. Six members, including Mr. Kenrick, were present. The subscription and admission fee varied. Three more members were elected at the meeting, each of them paying "ye admission fee and half-a-guinea." It was also resolved "that Mr. Lindsey, of Essex Street, London, and Mr. Belsham, one of ye Tutors of Hackney College, be admitted members of this Society for Life, in consequence of having paid at one time ye sum of five guineas for ye use of ye Society, together with half-a-guinea as an admission fee."

Extracts of letters, expressing their approbation of "ye design of ye Society" were read, "from ye following gentlemen, Mr. Lindsey, Mr. Belsham, Dr. Priestley, Samuel Kenrick, Esq., of Bewdley, Mr. Kentish, of Plymouth." Formal recommendations for the purchase of various publications, duly signed by three members, follow. This Committee meeting was succeeded by the 1st meeting of the Society at Crediton, Sept. 6th, 1792, when a sermon was delivered by Mr. Toulmin, which was to be printed, together with a new edition of ye Rules and Preamble."

This preamble was to exercise an important influence in the destinies of the Society in future years. It asserted the simple humanity of Jesus Christ, and thus excluded the Arians.

This exclusion was resented by some of the members, notably by Dr. Lant Carpenter. Owing largely to his persistent efforts, it was abolished before the meeting of the Society, held at Exeter in 1834. "For twenty years, viz., from 1811 till 1831, he had laboured in conjunction with his venerable friend, the Rev. Samuel Fawcett, of Yeovil, to open the Society for the reception of all the worshippers of the Father."

The early minutes of the Society record about thirteen years of steady work. When we come to Oct. 6th, 1804, another hand records the concern of the Committee on being deprived by Providence of the services of their late valuable secretary, the Rev. T. Kenrick, and on July 4th of the following year it was resolved to move the Committee from Exeter to Bristol. How the Society grew in members from this small beginning must be reserved for another paper.

A Word for our Faith

(By the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, B.A.).

We need not go far to seek a justification for our religious position. We are met by those who, after the pattern of the head of the Roman Catholic world, declare their system of faith to be infallible. We read of others who, in their zeal for certain doctrines, have turned a deaf ear even to the sacred pleas of human love. Such are they who have harrassed and persecuted brethren whom they were powerless to convince; but among such, we thank God that neither our fearless fore-runners of yesterday, nor their faithful successors to-day, can be ranked.

As Unitarians, our record is unstained by the recollection of any recourse to persecution; and for this reason, as much perhaps as any other, we would stand loyal to the stainless, yet oftimes misunderstood name that we bear. It is at once our custom, and our duty, to reverence man's inalienable right to his own opinion in matters pertaining to religion, for we hold inflexibly that no matter what a man's devout convictions may be, the withdrawal of our brotherly feeling from him, on any such grounds, is a sin in the sight of God.

And, after all, is it not amid such thoughts as these that we come upon the true cause of divergence from the earnest votaries of other systems of religion around us?

We are told that less is made now than formerly of differences from such men, upon points of doctrine; and certainly if we take up a religious newspaper, if we talk with brother-ministers of other households of faith, or exchange serious thoughts with businessmen, who worship in other churches, we shall be surprised at the common ground between them and ourselves, on the deep things of the spirit, and the issues of life. Our conviction will be strengthened that men are growing weary, and indifferent to any invitation to re-enter the barren tracks of theological controversy. But what it behoves every earnest Unitarian to strive for, is the extension, and the unreserved acceptance of that cardinal principle of the doctrine of Christ, the principle of leaving the soul alone with God, of the right of a man to decide his religious position for himself, and of thoroughgoing respect for him when he faithfully walks by the light of that reason set within him by God.

In view of such an attitude on the part of the worthy confessors of our faith, we may feel sure there is nothing narrow, or sectarian attaching to the honoured name of Unitarianism. As long as a shadow of ungenerous feeling rests on any man not accounted 'orthodox," so long, we may be sure, there will be ample, and strenuous, and beneficent work appealing to such an agency in the religious world, as we hold our church to be. Suppose the course of Religious History had been swayed, and guided by that spirit which did move our honoured forefathers! Had that been the case, it is no more than truth to say that the whole story of religion from Christ's day to ours would have been changed. Leave a man alone with God: let him follow Jesus in his own way! Think of Christian Prelates, Presbyteries, and Popes, choosing only such thoughts for their guides, and ask where, in that case, would be the sad memories of tears and of blood, which tell of the sorrows wrought by a contrary spirit that trampled on human affections, worked red ruin in myriads of happy homes, and turned almost every land of Europe into a veritable shambles, at the command of a stern and inhuman ecclesiasticism.

The Unitarian alone uplifted his voice, with a reproachless constancy against this unchristlike conduct. Down through the centuries, and to the present hour, our Unitarian brethren everywhere have been faithful in the self-same testimony, and that affords reason enough for our grateful devotion to the principles of faith and freedom wherein they trusted and were not brought to shame. In points of doctrine, and in assertions as to what is, or what is not, in a world which human eye hath not seen, we, who would try to be worthy of the grand old name we bear, equally with those who scruple not to judge us, or to disparage our faith, may be right, or may be wrong: but, in our reverence for the freedom of the mind, in our insistance upon the supreme duty of charity towards all forms of faith and, in our recognition of the fact that sincerity gives consecration to all creeds, our Unitarian household of faith can claim to be the servant of the present time, and the prophet of that better time yet, by God's blessing, to break upon the religious world.

Unitarian Propaganda in the West

(By the Rev. A. E. O'Connor).

In one sense, all our churches are centres of Unitarian propaganda. A quiet, but often very effective, propaganda is being carried on wherever our message is delivered, week by week, to all who come to hear it. But the propaganda I refer to is that which seeks to put our message before some of those many thousands of our fellow-countrymen who never attend a Unitarian service. It may not be our duty to disturb the faith of those who are fully satisfied with their own form of religion, and feel no disharmony between their traditional beliefs and the claims of their reason and conscience. But the number of those to whom this disharmony is painfully apparent is increasing year by year, and, while the old views no longer quite satisfy them, they know no others able to give them more satisfaction. It is surely our plain duty to place our gospel before those who may be willing to receive it, and some of whom may find it as helpful to them as it is to us. For many, this work is excellently done by the Postal Mission. For many more, it is done by the Unitarian vans.

So far as we are aware, no Unitarian van has yet been seen within a hundred miles of Devon-

shire, but a similar work on a much smaller scale has been carried on occasionally during the past year and a half by the Unitarian ministers of Plymouth and Torquay, aided sometimes by the lay-minister of Devonport and by several members of the Plymouth and Torquay congregations. Open-air meetings have been held in half-a-dozen towns, Unitarian views of religion have been set forth, and opportunities have been given for questions on any subject connected with these views. The effort has as yet hardly passed beyond the experimental stage, but we have learnt a few facts which may perhaps interest some readers of the "Unitarian Monthly," as the state of things in this somewhat remote district may possibly differ in some respects from that in more go-ahead parts of the country.

One thing that struck us was that to many people in our Devonshire towns the Unitarian position is still quite unknown. With the exception of Devonport, the meetings were held in towns which are without a Unitarian church; and most of the questioners seemed to have a difficulty in realising that it is possible to speak of the Bible with genuine appreciation and yet frankly to point out its errors and blemishes; to speak of Jesus with sincere reverence, without regarding him either as a god, or as an object of worship, or as a substitute. There are evidently large numbers of intelligent men and women whose views of religion are apparently quite unaffected by any form of modern thought. Or do the echoes of criticism that reach their ears only cause them to retrench themselves more obstinately behind the crumbling dogmas of the past? However that may be, for the bulk of our questioners, the Bible is still, from beginning to end, the infallible Word of God, and a line quoted from any Biblical writer, without regard to the context, is looked upon as ample proof of the truth of any opinion that it seems to favour.

Though it may seem surprising after what I have just said, we found almost everywhere that a considerable number of people are ready to listen to our message. Sometimes we had announced our meetings in the local press or by handbills, sometimes we simply began speaking without any previous announcement; but in all cases not only did passers-by stop to see what was being discussed, but most of them were sufficiently interested in the subject to stay to the end. There was often a good deal of shyness to be overcome before the first question was asked, but once begun the questioning generally went on pretty briskly, and the answers were usually listened to with marked interest by a large number.

The value of such propaganda cannot be measured by what is seen. May we not reasonably hope that not only some who ask questions, but also many who silently listen find in some of the new thoughts brought before them a help to a more enlightened and more satisfying conception of religion?

Open-air Mission.

All honour to the Van Mission for opening the way. The Missionary Conference which led in that sees that the vans cannot be everywhere at once, and so its committee some months ago resolved to promote open-air preaching without the vans, either in places after the vans have been there, or in preparation before they came, or anywhere else where they could assist by sending ministers and other speakers.

Consequently though the decision was not until summer time had come, a beginning was made by sending speakers in June and July to assist the Rev. Geo. Pegler, B.A., at his open-air meetings at Burslem. And this assistance has been repeated in September for a fortnight's open-air mission at Tunstall and Burslem. Ministers have been sent too for open-air meetings at Bury (Chesham), and for others held at Ashton-under-Lyne. No doubt next year work of this kind will be organised on a much more extended scale, especially in Lancashire and Cheshire, and probably Yorkshire.

In the "Christian Register" of Sept. 2nd (U.S.A.), there is an article on "Curbstone Preaching" contributed by the Rev. Henry G. Ives, which shows that our American Unitarians may have been influenced by the English open-air propaganda. It is the story of the work of two Unitarian ministers preaching in the open-air in seven townships where there is no Unitarian place of worship.

There are hundreds of townships in England where Unitarianism is not preached, and where it is high time its gospel was heard. To do our duty we must make adequate preparations in the winter time. Our people and our churches need to be awakened to their duty in this matter. Accordingly, the Open-air Mission Sub-Committee of the Missionary Conference has been enlarged, its scope extended so as to include indoor work, and its name altered to that of "Mission Work Sub-Committee." Under its auspices, meetings in connection with our churches and special lectures will be arranged, to awaken the Missionary spirit, and to promote Missionary work. This is needed in order to arouse more support for our Van work, to stir up more response to the efforts of our British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and to assist the district associations and churches in their efforts to do their work more effectively in their respective localities. Our word is greatly needed everywhere, and it will be woe unto us if we neglect to preach the Gospel.

To fear science or knowledge lest it disturb our old beliefs, is to fear the influx of the Divine Wisdom into the souls of our fellow men; for what is science but the piece-meal REVELATION,—uncovering—of the plan of creation, by the agency of those chosen prophets of nature whom God has illuminated from the central light of truth for that single purpose?

——— —O. W. Holmes.

What you bring away from the Bible depends to some extent on what you carry to it.—O. W. Holmes.

Home Circle.

Lakeland.

"There is a power to bless
In hillside loneliness—
In tarns and dreary places;
A virtue in the brook,
A freshness in the look
Of mountain's joyless faces.
And so when life is dull,
And when my heart is full
Because my dreams have frowned,
I wander up the rills—
To stones, and tarns and hills,—
I go there to be crowned."

Those lines were written of the Lake District by F. W. Faber. And may be, there is no more wonderful district in the world in its way than our own English Lakeland. Just think! in a space of about 20 square miles there are some hundreds of mountains, 178 of them over 2,000 feet high, sixteen lakes, 40 tarns, numerous streams, waterfalls, mountain passes, and the most beautiful scenery.

Faber, as a young man, was a tutor in a family at Ambleside. He was acquainted with Wordsworth, the chief of the Lake poets, and with other Lakeland notabilities. Afterwards he was a clergyman of the Church of England, and later he became a Roman Catholic priest. Then Wordsworth said, that Rome gained a priest but England lost a poet. But he wrote some hymns much loved by Unitarians, such as:—

There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in his justice
Which is more than liberty;

and that other in which the inspiriting verse comes:

For right is right since God is God;
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.

Our readers, young and old, have read the two accounts of Creation which the Bible gives in "Genesis," and some have also read the story of Creation as told by men of science. In the Lake District many of the mountains are composed of Silurian rocks usually called Skiddaw slate. These rocks are some of the earliest in the crust of the earth. They are said by geologists to have been a stratum 8,000 feet thick, but are now crumpled up and tilted in a great anticline which forms the mountains. In the Lake District a thickness of 20,000 feet of rock has been removed by denudation. Think of the immense stretches of time required for all this. And Sir Archibald Geikie claims 100 millions of years as the shortest time during which there has been life on the earth; Sir Charles Lyell said 240 million years were necessary for the deposit of all the stratified rocks; and Helmholtz calculates that the solar system has existed 500 million years. And even Faber says:

There is grace enough for thousands
Of new worlds as great as this.

Harriet Martineau, sister of James Martineau lived many years at the Knoll, Ambleside. She built a chapel too for Nonconformist services. This building was afterwards leased to the Methodists, but has recently reverted to Miss Martineau's heirs, and now a Unitarian minister, nephew of Miss Martineau, conducts Sunday services therein—the Rev. Philip Martineau Higginson. Miss Martineau wrote many books including one—a favourite with young people: "Feats on the Fiords," and some poetry of hers may now be quoted:

Beneath this starry arch,
Nought resteth or is still;
But all things hold their march,
As if by one great will.

What associations of famous people there are with this Lakeland. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, the Lake poets. Mrs. Lynn Linton, who married W. J. Linton, engraver and poet; it was at Brantwood, Coniston, they lived. Mr. Linton purchased Brantwood from Gerald Massey, who lived there some years. In that house Mrs. Linton wrote several of her novels. That by which she is best known: "The True History of Joshua Davidson," describes how a Jesus would be treated were he in the world to-day. George Eliot visited Miss Martineau at Ambleside, and she was acquainted with Gerald Massey, who was her model of the character of "Felix Holt the Radical." It is interesting that Brantwood occupied by Gerald Massey, then by the Lintons, was sold by Mr. Linton to John Ruskin, who lived there for the latter half of his life. Linton wrote:

I live for those who love me,
For those that know me true,
For the heaven that smiles above me
And awaits my spirit too;
For the wrongs that need resistance
For the cause that needs assistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that I can do.

Trust not the teacher with his lying scroll
Who tears the charter of thy shuddering soul;
The God of love, who gave the breath that warms
All living dust in all its varied forms,
Asks not the tribute of a world like this
To fill the measure of His perfect bliss.

—O. W. Holmes.

Democracy must get rid of the natural man of each for himself, and have a new birth into the spiritual man, the ideal self of each for all. This is its great lesson. —Richard Whiteing.

Literature.

"Oliver Wendell Holmes,—an Appreciation," by William Lawrence Schroeder, M.A. (Manchester), 2/- net. Philip Green, 5, Essex-street, Strand, London, W.C.

Mr. Schroeder has done well what he set out to do. His "Appreciation" is not of the usual sort. It is a fairly balanced estimate and criticism. There is neither fulsome praise nor extreme fault-finding, yet due praise is given and defects are frankly admitted, and as freely indicated. Oliver Wendell Holmes is here weighed in the balance, is given full credit for his excellent qualities, and where he is found wanting it is honestly stated. Too often an "Appreciation" of a well-known writer is the effusion of an ardent disciple if not indeed a worshipper of his subject; in which case there is but little, if any, impartiality of judgment. But in this instance there is just that detachment from the subject which made a just judgment possible.

"We shall understand our author better in the frank recognition of his limitations."

"The truth is that Holmes in poetic achievement fell far short of the poetic ideal."

"As essayist Holmes has been compared to Lamb. . . . Lamb is incomparably the greater artist."

"Acknowledgment of his own failure as a novelist should not blind us to certain admirable qualities of his stories." "As a novelist Oliver Wendell Holmes has little claim to the regard of posterity."

"However partial may be our admiration of his life and writings, and whatever criticism we may bring to bear upon his thought, throughout all his work there are qualities of sincerity and kindly humour and real religious faith, which in their total appeal command our recognition of his worth as one of the most potent influences for good in American literature."

These quotations may fairly sum up Mr. Schroeder's estimate of the genial autocrat, though no mere quotations taken from their context can possibly give a completely just conception of the book from which they are taken. This essay is far more positive than negative. Its pages abound in real admiration for Holmes and his work, revelling in his wit and humour, his cheery optimism, and fully appreciating the best he did as poet and prose writer, as man of science, and as a personally religious force.

The volume contains a "Chronological Table" of biographical events; a thoughtful "Introduction"; and chapters on Holmes' "Personality," his "Artistry," his attitude towards "Reform," and to "Religion" —with a summing up in "Conclusion." And throughout the treatment is clear, informing, illustrated by frequent references and quotations, as well as by comparisons with the work of other authors. Readers thoroughly acquainted with all that Holmes published are sure to enjoy this "Appreciation," and those to whom it may be a first introduction to a knowledge of Holmes will rise from its perusal well informed as to the kind of man he was, as to the quality of things he wrote, and as to the many-sidedness of the work he did. There is evidence throughout that Mr. Schroeder knows his subject, and that his judgment is guided by acquaintance with a wide range of literature. His facility of expression, absence of ponderousness, and of difficult words and phrases, and his judicial spirit, added to a certain literary grace, make the reading of the book of unflagging interest from beginning to end.

Lack of space forbids more than a passing allusion in this notice to Holmes's Calvinistic upbringing, and his earnest adherence to the Unitarianism he embraced. Mr. Schroeder indicates that interest in theology was greater than any other with Holmes, and that he was a most zealous defender of his Unitarian Faith. The book merits commendation, and we urge our readers to make themselves acquainted with its pages.

"The Positivist Review" for September (3½d. by post) contains an article on "The Movement towards Free Catholicism" in which special notice is given to the plea set forth by some Unitarians, particularly by the Rev. J. M. Lloyd-Thomas, in his book, and in the paper read at the recent National Conference at Bolton. While giving a welcome to the tendency voiced by Mr. Lloyd Thomas a warning is given that Unitarians in their efforts to become "Catholic" should not become corrupted "by amalgamation with more superstitious elements," and that they should be careful to keep their rationalism pure and unsullied. —(Watts and Co., 17, Johnson's Court, Fleet-street, London, E.C.).

"The League of Progressive Thought and Social Service" sends us specimens of its pamphlets. Some of these were noticed in our July issue. One of the most recent is: "The Social Meaning of the New Theology" by Dr. F. W. G. Foat, M.A. (one penny), with a foreword by the Rev. R. J. Campbell, M.A.,—it sets forth a rationalising of theology and shows its implications for social service. Dr. Foat is minister of Stoke Newington Unitarian Chapel, and organiser of the Social Service Section of the Progressive League. The many Unitarians and others actively interested in social service would find much that is suggestive and helpful in this handy tract.—(Progressive League, 27, Chancery-lane, London, W.C.)

If we have a Father, He will care for us and do what is best for us, and if He is as good as even our earthly fathers and mothers have been, will judge us not by our poor stumbling acts and short-sighted views, and pitiable shortcomings, but in the light of his own magnanimous, forgiving, loving nature.

——— —O. W. Holmes.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine out-grown shell by life's unresting sea.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Why Propagate Unitarianism ?

(By the Rev. W. E. Channing, D.D.).

Unitarianism has been made a term of so much reproach, and has been uttered in so many tones of alarm, horror, indignation, and scorn, that to many it gives only a vague impression of something monstrous, impious, unutterably perilous. To such I would say that this doctrine, which is considered by some as the last and most perfect invention of Satan, the consummation of his blasphemies, the most cunning weapon ever forged in the fires of hell, amounts to this:

That there is One God, even the Father; and that Jesus Christ is not this One God, but His Son and messenger, who derived all his powers and glories from the Universal Parent, and who came into the world not to claim supreme homage for himself, but to carry up the soul to his Father as the Only Divine Person, the Only Ultimate Object of religious worship.

To us, this doctrine seems not to have sprung from hell, but to have descended from the Throne of God, and to invite and attract us thither. To us it seems to come from the Scriptures, with a voice loud as the sound of many waters, and as articulate and clear as if Jesus, in a bodily form, were pronouncing it distinctly in our ears.

That we desire to propagate this doctrine, we do not conceal. It is a treasure which we wish not to confine to ourselves, which we dare not lock up in our own breasts. We regard it as given to us for others, as well as for ourselves. We should rejoice to carry it into every dwelling, and to send it far and wide to the remotest settlements of our country. Am I asked why we wish this diffusion? We dare not say that we are in no degree influenced by sectarian feeling; for we see it raging around us, and we should be more than men were we wholly to escape an epidemic passion. We do hope, however, that our main purpose and aim is not sectarian, but to promote a purer and nobler piety than now prevails. We are not induced to spread our opinions by the mere conviction that they are true; for there are many truths, historical, metaphysical, scientific, literary. which we have no anxiety to propagate. We regard them as the highest, most important, most efficient truths, and therefore demanding a firm testimony and earnest efforts to make them known.

In thus speaking we do not mean that we regard our peculiar views as essential to salvation. Far from us be the spirit of exclusion, the very spirit of antichrist, the worst of all the delusions of Popery and Protestantism. We hold nothing to be essential but the simple and supreme dedication of the mind, heart, and life to God and to His will. This inward and practical devotedness to the Supreme Being, we are assured, is attained and accepted under all the forms of Christianity. We believe, however, that it is favoured by that truth which we maintain, as by no other system of faith. We regard Unitarianism as peculiarly the friend of inward, living, practical religion. For this we value it—for this we would spread it; and we desire none to embrace it but such as shall seek and derive from it this celestial influence.—(From "Unitarian Christianity most favourable to piety," 1826).

In the World, yet above it.

It is said that Mr. Emerson and Mr. Parker were walking in Concord one day, when a wild advocate of Second Adventism met them, and announced to them in an excited manner that the world was coming to an end on a special day. Mr. Emerson replied in his calm, quiet way: "Well, suppose the world does come to an end; it would not trouble me any. I think I can get on without it."

And so, when I find this marvellous human mind of ours, this soul, able to do those wondrous things while still connected with the body, it raises the question, at least, whether in the last resort the soul cannot afford to say of the body, as Mr. Emerson did of the world, "I think I can get on without it."

—Minot J. Savage.

The Rev. Jenkyn Lloyd Jones, Unitarian Minister, of the Lincoln Centre, Chicago, has received the degree of LL.D. from the University of Wisconsin.

Unitarian services are being started at Luton, Bedfordshire, partly as a result of a visit from the Unitarian Van two years ago; at Brentford, Essex, too, services are to be held in October.

The Progressive League holds its Autumn Assembly Meetings, October 9 to 12.

PULPIT CHANGES: Rev. J. Islan Jones, B.A., resigned at Accrington and appointed to Halliwell Road Free Church, Bolton; Farewell to Rev. H. Dawtrey, B.A., Higher Broughton, Manchester, and presentations, August 30th; Welcome, Rev. H. Fisher Short, Mossley, September 4th; Rev. E. W. Lummis, M.A., to be at Clifton to the end of the year; Rev. G. L. Phelps, farewell and presentation at Evesham, on leaving for Holywood, Belfast; Rev. G. J. Slipper, commenced ministry, Newry, September 12th; Welcome to Rev. W. S. McLauchlan, M.A. (late Congregationalist at Darwen) to the ministry, Oldham Unitarian Church, September 18th.

DEATHS: Rev. William Shakespeare, Ilkeston, August 14th, 78; Mrs. Robert McCalmont, of Belfast, August 15th; Miss M. H. Stanley, second daughter late Rev. F. W. Stanley, London, August 24th, 24; Mr. H. T. L. Marshall, younger son Rev. T. L. Marshall, Exeter, August 25th, 45; Mr. Thomas Bailie, Newtonards, August 26th; Mrs. Robert Holmes, Hull, September 3rd, 88; Mr. John Horsfall, Boothfold, Newchurch, September 10th, 45; Mrs. Annie Morris, Guildford, late of Walthamstow, September 10th, 72; Mr. Joseph Entwistle, Deane, Bolton, September 11th, 49; Mrs. James Farrar, Stand, September 14th.

Notes and News.

Of the great men of the nineteenth century, born 1809, whose centenary is celebrated this year, Tennyson in England, and Oliver Wendell Holmes in America, born in August, have received much attention in periodical literature and in pulpits during the last few weeks.

TO CHURCH SECRETARIES—A HINT: A complaint has recently been made to the Editor by a minister, that out of about 18 letters received by him from church secretaries inviting him to preach harvest or anniversary sermons, not one had the thoughtful consideration to enclose a postage stamp for reply. Ministers are not millionaires, and the sum they have to spend in postages on church business in any case makes a considerable item in a year. If secretaries asking for a favour really want a reply to their applications they need not make the minister written to—to pay for it. The golden rule is not a bad one.

THE VAN MISSION: This grand work is drawing near its present season's activities. During the past five weeks 130 meetings, with about 50,000 total attendances (August 15 to September 12: 48,920), and average per meeting of over 370, have been held, the most remarkable successes being in Scotland, some meetings being 1,000 and even 1,500 in number of audience. The Van Mission is in need of funds and of more widespread financial support. Subscriptions to Rev. T. P. Spedding, Buckingham Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport.

The North and East Lancashire Unitarian Mission (District Association of Churches) is to celebrate its jubilee shortly by raising £5,000 for aggressive work, and by issuing a Memorial Volume of its history.

WORDS OF CHEER: Frequently the Editor of this monthly receives letters of kind appreciation of the paper from its readers. A few days ago the following came from a literary man—an author of repute:

> "I feel it my duty to thank you for the excellent mental and spiritual repast provided for your readers month by month. To me the magazine is a source of never-ending delight, and I am always ready for the new numbers when they appear. I have found the various articles on the principles of Unitarianism exceedingly helpful, strengthening and confirming me in the faith to which I have vowed a life-long allegiance. For all this I am profoundly thankful, and trust that the magazine will continue to prosper and be used in propagating the truths that will yet set a chained world free."

This was a revelation from an utter stranger of whose interest the Editor had no previous knowledge.

The Rev. Charles W. Casson, Secretary, Publicity Department, American Unitarian Association, and originator of the Paragraph Pulpit idea, writes to the Editor of this monthly concerning the "Unitarian Calendar" published for American churches, and says: "The Calendar idea is really an English importation, and I believe you are the originator of it. We are finding it very helpful, and the churches are taking hold of it widely. My purpose is exactly the same as yours,—to put it into every Unitarian family. What most we need at this present time is publicity among our own people and the resultant feeling of Union and fellowship."

The Sale of Work, Great Hucklow, realised £163 12s. in the two days, total receipts £201.

Miss Dorothy Tarrant, daughter of Rev. W. G. Tarrant, B.A., Wandsworth Unitarian Church, has passed the M.A. examination of the London University in Classics, with distinction in Ancient Philosophy.—Congratulations!

Will readers please note advertisement of the meetings of the B. and F. U. A. at Rochdale, in another column?

Manchester College, Oxford, has secured more than £3,000 appealed for to clear off its accumulated debt. There ought now to be a good prospect of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester, raising the amount required to complete its Summerville scheme.

The Rev. J. Page Hopps has been officiating on several Sundays at the Chapel Lane Unitarian Chapel, Bradford; he has now resumed the services of his congregation lately associated with Little Portland Street Chapel, London, now held in University Hall, Gordon Square.

Rev. Mary A. Safford, of U.S.A., has been preaching for the Unitarians at Holbeck, Leeds, at Chapel Lane, Bradford, and at other places, and the Rev. F. C. Southworth, of Meadville, U.S.A., at Ipswich.

Dr. Samuel Johnson, Boswell's hero, born September 18th, 1709, at Lichfield, has had his bi-centenary celebrated at Lichfield, Lord Rosebery being the principal speaker.

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The British & Foreign Unitarian Association.

MEETINGS AT ROCHDALE

FRIDAY, SATURDAY and SUNDAY,
1st, 2nd & 3rd OCTOBER, 1909.

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS.

FRIDAY, 1st October.

3–4. RECEPTION BY THE ROCHDALE COMMITTEE.

4–5. OPENING PROCEEDINGS. Chairman: Alderman Topper, J.P. (Rochdale). Short Speeches by Alderman Healey, J.P. (Heywood), Rev. John Evans, B.A. (Rochdale), Councillor William Wadsworth (Todmorden), Mr. F. J. Thorpe (Middleton), and others.

5–6. TEA.

6–7. CONFERENCE OF THE MINISTERIAL FELLOWSHIP.

7-30. RELIGIOUS SERVICE in the Blackwater Street Church. Rev. J. Mason Bass, M.A. (Chesham) will conduct the Devotional Service; Sermon by Rev. W. Copeland Bowie (London).

SATURDAY, 2nd October.

10–10-30. DEVOTIONAL SERVICE. Rev. W. S. McLauchlan, M.A. (Oldham).

10-30–1. CONFERENCE on 'The Opportunity for our Unitarian Word and Work, and how best to take advantage of it at the present time.' Chairman: Coun. David Healey (Heywood). Papers by Rev. A. W. Fox, M.A. (Todmorden), and Mr. Howard Young, LL.B. (President of the Sunday School Association). The Discussion will be opened by Rev. T. B. Evans, M.A. (Heywood), and Mr. Ion Pritchard (London).

1–2. LUNCHEON.

3–5. CONFERENCE on 'The Social Movements of our time, and the relation of Congregations and Ministers thereto.' Chairman: Mr. John Harrison (London). Papers by Rev. M. R. Scott (Southport), and Mr. H. G. Chancellor (London). The Discussion will be opened by Rev. E. D. Priestley Evans (Bury).

5–6. TEA.

6-30–9. PUBLIC MEETING in the Provident Hall, Lord Street. Chairman: Mr. Walter Nurse (Rochdale). Speakers: Mr. John Harrison (President of the Association), Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, B.A. (President of the National Conference), Rev. Henry Gow, B.A. (London), Rev. C. J. Street, M.A., LL.B. (Sheffield), Mr. H. G. Chancellor (London), Mr. H. B. Lawford, B.A. (London), Mr. R. M. Montgomery, M.A. (London), Rev. W. Copeland Bowie (Secretary of the Association), and Rev. T. P. Spedding (Missionary Agent). Selections of Music by the United Choirs of Rochdale, Oldham, Heywood, Middleton and Todmorden.

SUNDAY, 3rd October.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES by members of the Deputation as follows:—

HEYWOOD—Rev. W. Copeland Bowie in the Morning; Mr. John Harrison will give an Address at the Evening Service.

MIDDLETON—Rev. T. P. Spedding in the Evening.

OLDHAM—Rev. T. P. Spedding in the Morning; Rev. Henry Gow in the Evening.

TODMORDEN—Mr. H. G. Chancellor, Adult School in the Afternoon and at the Evening Service.

ROCHDALE—Rev. Henry Gow in the Morning; Mr. Ion Pritchard, Afternoon Scholars' Service; Rev. W. Copeland Bowie in the Evening.

Ministers, Delegates of District Associations, and the members of Churches throughout the district are cordially invited to be present. Communications respecting the Local arrangements should be addressed to Mr. Fred Fitton, 11 Thrush Street, Meanwood, Rochdale.

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UNITARIAN ORGANISATIONS, Etc.

The British & Foreign Unitarian Association.

Headquarters and Bookroom:
Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.
Annual Business Meetings: Whit-week.
Secretary: Rev. W. Copeland Bowie.

Founded 1825. It is the chief missionary organisation of the Unitarian Churches of Great Britain and Ireland. It originated as a representative Association, and at the present time it is supported by annual contributions from 244 churches, from some District Associations, and from individual subscribers, delegates from churches being invited to its annual business meeting and voting. It supports missionary work at home and abroad by grants in aid of stipends to ministers and missionaries, by co-operation with District Associations, by grants to assist churches, by the publication of books and tracts illustrative of Unitarian Christianity, and by grants of tracts freely made to individual inquirers, congregations, missionary societies, and postal missions; and its work includes the safeguarding of the civil and religious rights of Unitarians.—Catalogue of publications sent to applicants. Correspondence: Address to Secretary. Contributions to Treasurer: Mr. H. Chatfield Clarke.

The National Triennial Conference of Unitarian and Kindred Congregations.

Secretary: Rev. J. Harwood, B.A., 105, Palace Road, Tulse Hill Park, London, S.W.

Originated by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association 1881, for religious fellowship and conference. First Conference at Liverpool 1882, followed by others at Birmingham 1885, Leeds 1888, London 1891, Manchester 1894, Sheffield 1897, Leicester 1900, Liverpool 1903, Oxford 1906, Bolton 1909,—always held in April.

The Ministers' Sustentation Fund, the Ministers' Pension and Insurance Fund, the Guilds' Union, the Social Service Union, originated from discussions of the Conference. The Conference is a representative body. It is supported financially by 145 churches, 8 District Societies, and some individual subscribers; but all Unitarian Churches are on its roll and can send delegates to its meetings, and they, along with the ministers, decide by vote its matters of business.

Central Postal Mission and Unitarian Workers' Union.

Hon Secretary: Miss Florence Hill, 36, Heath Street, Hampstead, London, N.W.

Spreads information about Unitarianism by correspondence and distribution of literature through the post, and by various other means; promotes Postal Missions and affiliates them together, and assists other missionary work. There are thirteen district postal missions affiliated, and several Unitarian reading circles. List of names and addresses of secretaries can be had from Miss Hill.

The British League of Unitarian Women.

Established 1908. Secretaries: Miss Helen Brooke Herford, 1a, Christchurch Road, Hampstead, London, N.W., and Miss Violet Preston, 9, Ladbroke Gardens, London, W. Objects: To assist churches, and the denomination generally, in promotion of religious life and missionary activity, to bring Unitarian women into closer co-operation and fellowship, and to form local branches.

The Sunday School Association.

Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.
Hon. Secretary: Mr. Ion Pritchard.

Founded 1833. Promotes Sunday School education generally, and publishes religious books for Sunday Schools and young people. District Sunday School Associations of Unitarian Sunday Schools, and most Unitarian Sunday Schools are affiliated to it, and can be represented at its annual business meetings in Whit-week. Bookroom and office hours, 9 till 6; Saturdays, 9 till 2. Catalogue of publications and list of reward and gift books sent post free on application to Mr. B. C. Hare, Essex Hall.

The Guilds' Union.

Inaugurated 1901. Promotes Guilds and Religious Societies for Young People of Unitarian Congregations and Sunday Schools. Secretary: Rev. C. M. Wright, M.A., Heather Brae, Atkinson Road, Ashton-on-Mersey, Sale, Manchester.

The National Unitarian Temperance Association.

Established 1893. Promotes the Temperance Movement in connection with Unitarian Churches and Sunday Schools, and the formation of Bands of Hope and Temperance Societies amongst them, and seeks to affiliate them. Hon. Secretaries: J. Bredall, F.R.G.S., 3, Birdhurst Road, South Croydon, and A. W. Harris, 53, Lowden Road, Herne Hill, London, S.E. Organising Secretary: W. R. Marshall, 31, Birkhall Road, Catford, London, S.E.

The Social Service Union.

Founded by the National Conference, 1906. Secretaries: Miss Catherine Gittins, 6, Salisbury Rd., Leicester, and Rev. R. P. Farley, B.A., 11, Algernon Road, Kilburn, London, N.W. It seeks to arouse interest of Unitarian and Kindred Churches in the study of pressing social problems, and promotes practical efforts towards their solution.

UNITARIAN PERIODICALS: The Inquirer, 1d. weekly, 3, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.; The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald, 1d. weekly, 5, Fetter Lane, London, E.C.; The Unitarian Monthly 1d., Parsonage, Hyde-road, Mottram, Manchester; Young Days, 1d. monthly—a magazine for children,—Sunday School Association; The Essex Hall Year Book, British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, 1s.

TO THE MINISTER
— OR —
THE COMMITTEE

Of every Unitarian Congregation, and to Church Members.

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